Survey Complete

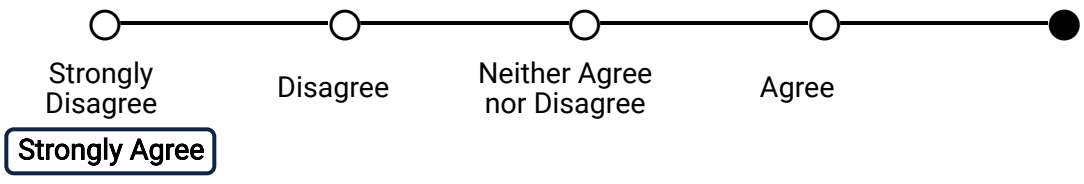
This self-assessment is intended to help you reflect on the extent to which you accept responsibility for your actions. The 14 items measure the extent to which you have low, moderate, or high personal responsibility.

Source: Items were based on C. Olckers, “Psychological Ownership: Development of an Instrument,” *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology/SA Tydskrif vir Bedryfsielkunde,* 39(2), http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v39i2.1105 (http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v39i2.1105); J. B. Avey, B. J. Avolio, C. D. Crossley, and F. Luthans, “Psychological Ownership: Theoretical Extensions, Measurement and Relation to Work Outcomes,” *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 2009, pp. 173-191; and L. Van Dyne and J L. Pierce, “Psychological Ownership and Feelings of Possession: Three Field Studies Predicting Employee Attitudes and Organizational Citizenship Behavior,” *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 2004, pp. 439-459.

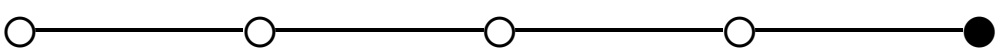
The following survey was designed to assess the extent to which you take ownership and accept responsibility for your actions. There are no right or wrong answers to the statements. Your answers should reflect your typical thoughts and feelings, not your preferred way of behaving. After completing the self-assessment, read the feedback that explains how to understand your score and interpret your results.

You must respond to all statements in order to receive full credit for this self-assessment activity.

1. **I accept complete responsibility for my actions at home, school, and work.**

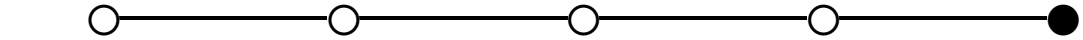


2. **I take full ownership for the results or consequences of my decisions.**



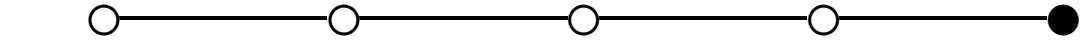
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree

3. I am personally responsible for my work at school and at my job.



Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree

4. I believe I should accept the consequences of my work.



Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree

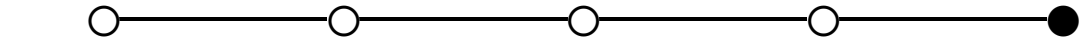
5. If I am unable to complete a task or deliver a final product, it is my responsibility to find an alternative solution.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree

6. When working on tasks or projects, I ensure that all problems or roadblocks are effectively resolved.

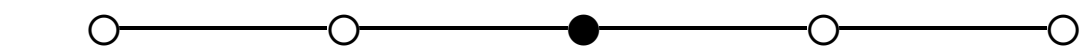
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree

7. If I thought someone was doing something wrong, I would challenge them.



Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree

8. My failures are more often due to someone else than to my actions or performance.

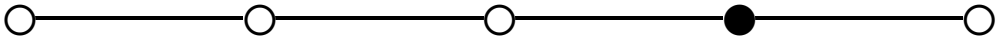


Strongly Disagree | Disagree | **Neither Agree nor Disagree** | Agree | Strongly Agree

9. **I would proactively tell a professor or manager if I observed someone doing something unethical or wrong.**

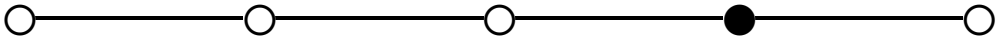
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | **Agree** | Strongly Agree

10. **I feel a lot of personal ownership for what happens in my classes and at work.**



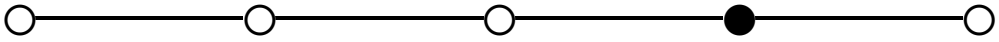
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | **Agree** | Strongly Agree

11. **It is easy for me to think of my college/university as MINE.**



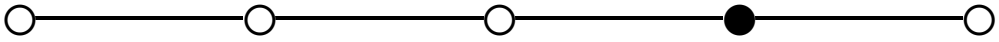
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | **Agree** | Strongly Agree

12. **If I don't understand how to complete a task at school or at work, it is my responsibility to figure it out.**



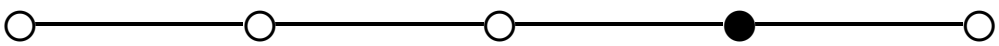
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | **Agree** | Strongly Agree

13. **I own what happens to me in my career.**



Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | **Agree** | Strongly Agree

14. **I tend to blame others or situational factors when things do not go my way.**



Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Score

Range	
52 to 70	You may willingly and actively take ownership and accept responsibility for your actions.

A truism in life is people are only likely to change their behavior in positive or constructive ways when they take personal responsibility for their actions. That is, you cannot be expected to be motivated to change your behavior or even to think about the possibility of change if you do not think your behavior is your own responsibility. While this may seem obvious, people often blame others for events in their lives. For example, when you do poorly on a test, you might think the professor made the test to be too difficult (blaming it on another person), or you might think the material being tested is not important and therefore not something you should be tested on in the first place (blaming it on the situation).

Research indicates that the tendency to avoid taking responsibility for our behavior is very common. This self-assessment is intended to help you reflect on your own personal inclinations in this regard. If your score is in the high range (52 or above), you would seem to be more likely to take responsibility for your behaviors. If your score is in the moderate or low range, you might be less likely to take responsibility for your behavior and thus have more difficulty thinking you have the ability to change your actions.

Persons who are more likely to take responsibility tend to have the following characteristics. First, they tend to feel they have the capability to succeed (self-efficacy). Second, they think they are accountable for their actions. Third, they feel as though they fully belong to the group or organization which provides the context for their behavior. And fourth, they have a good sense of their work or behavioral identity. That is, persons doing an accounting function have high self-identity if they view themselves as “accountants.”

The recommended actions depend on the score you received. If you are in the low or moderate personal responsibility score range, you should begin to work on changing your approach. Research shows that you are more likely to be successful when you take responsibility for your behavior. Surveys from employers further show that this characteristic is desirable when hiring college graduates. Look at the four characteristics associated with taking responsibility that are described above (self-efficacy, accountability, sense of belonging, and sense of identity). What could you work on in your own life to become a person who takes responsibility for your behavior? Most importantly, work on avoiding self-serving bias. Whenever you find yourself blaming other people or the situation for your poor performance, take a hard look at things that you may have done to contribute to the problem and work to address your own behavior.

If you are in the high personal responsibility range, you are in a good position to take a good, hard look at your own behavior with an eye towards things you can improve. Seek out feedback from supervisors, faculty, co-workers and others in a position to offer you advice on ways you can improve. It is important to specifically ask for this kind of feedback, and it is equally important to view any feedback that is offered in a positive, constructive fashion (as opposed to taking it personally). One suggestion is to ask people familiar with your performance to provide one aspect of your work they liked and one that they did not find effective. It is useful to ask for such feedback after completing key milestones or entire projects.

You might also seek out challenging assignments that provide the opportunity to learn new skills and/or to practice skills you possess. Above all, avoid the temptation to blame others for difficulties and shortcomings. Take responsibility for your behavior and work to improve.

Remember your score on this self-assessment, while useful for self-understanding, should not be over-interpreted. First, every person is complex and it is impossible to fully capture your uniqueness in a short self-assessment. Second, you may well find your sense of ownership and responsibility may change over time, or you may come to understand what yourself better only later in life. Third, there are certainly times and situations where you are not responsible for the

situation. For example, if you are the victim of abuse by a person or persons in power positions, do not take responsibility for this abuse. Rather, seek help from authorities, counselors, and others who can come along side you to address the situation.